The impact of pharmacist shortage on the inventory management of medicines in Primary Healthcare Centers

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BACKGROUND

In many countries, including Indonesia, pharmacist is the only authorized person for the inventory management of medicines. However, in the case of pharmacist shortage, other personnel may take over this function leading to a question whether such practice may affect the efficiency and accuracy of the inventory management. This is particularly the case in most Primary Healthcare Centers (PHCs) in Indonesia. Therefore, this study compared the outcome of practice between pharmacist and non-pharmacist in the inventory management of medicines.

METHODS

An observational study to 146 PHCs in East Java was conducted involving 73 pharmacists and 73 non-pharmacist staffs, respectively. This study was conducted from July to October 2019. Each respondent completed a questionnaire focusing on the inventory aspects in the management of medicines such as stock amount, purchasing accuracy and storage system.

RESULTS

There was a significant contrast in term of outcome between pharmacist and non-pharmacist when managing the inventory of medicines in the PHCs. Purchasing accuracy is higher for pharmacist (90%) as compared to non-pharmacist (68%). As a result, pharmacist manages the inventory more efficiently with only 2% of the drugs were wasted and expired, respectively. In contrast, non-pharmacist staff contributed to 16% of drugs were eventually wasted and 18% of drugs were expired, respectively. As a consequence, cost for inventory of medicines was higher in the PHCs in which pharmacist is not available.

CONCLUSION

The role of pharmacist in the inventory of medicines is vital as it may contribute to better efficient and accurate management of medicines

REFERENCE